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ABSTRACT

The "Language Inquiry," a collection of 100 statements about attitudes toward language, was devised to help teachers evaluate themselves and determine their students' ideas about language so that they could better plan what materials and strategies to utilize in a course. By indicating the degree of his agreement with each statement in the "Inquiry" and then comparing his responses with those of 10 linguists who evaluated each item, the respondent will better understand his own ideas about language and how they agree with current expert thought. An additional section of the "Inquiry" provides an opportunity for the respondent to record three items, from among the 100, that he would like to have discussed and the reasons for his choice. People who would find such a survey of value in their teaching situations are methods teachers and other teacher educators, teachers of language-related subjects, workshop leaders, high school and college supervisors, and high school English teachers. (The "Language Inquiry" with the responses of the linguists to each item is reproduced here.) See also TE 001 654. (LH)

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ILLINOIS STATE-WIDE CURRICULUM STUDY CENTER
IN THE PREPARATION OF SECONDARY SCHOOL
ENGLISH TEACHERS (ISCPET)

Using the *Language Inquiry* as a Teaching Device

Ellen A. Frogner
Southern Illinois University
Edwardsville, Illinois

July 1969

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FOREWORD

Several years ago an exciting concept in research on English teacher preparation was developed. In the introductory paper of the Proceedings of the 1962 Project English Research Conference ["The Importance of the Conference to Project English" in Needed Research in the Teaching of English, prepared by Erwin R. Steinberg, U. S. Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C.: 1963.], J. N. Hook listed several seminal ideas for a research project in English and English teacher preparation which could involve representatives of various college departments who were knowledgeable, experienced, and concerned with the teaching of English at many different levels. Two years later the Illinois State-Wide Curriculum Study Center in the Preparation of Secondary School English Teachers (ISCPET) was formed, and twenty colleges and universities in Illinois and hundreds of people in English, education, and other areas were involved in studying college curriculums for preparing high school English teachers.

At the same time that ISCPET was getting underway, other exciting concepts were developing. It was my good fortune to witness the teaching of some of the aspects of language which are treated in Ellen Frogner's *Language Inquiry*. To see a master teacher--a teacher who is a master in the true sense of the

word--enlighten students about their language and in their use of language is a pleasure. To serve as a student teacher under that master is a privilege. And it was in that position that I observed seminal ideas of the *Language Inquiry*.

Two years after ISCPET began, and with funds supplied by that Center, Ellen A. Frogner began the formal research on the *Language Inquiry* as an ISCPET Special Research Study. Often, research in the humanities is taken as seriously and is conducted as carefully as it is in the physical sciences. The research for the development of the *Language Inquiry* and the subsequent analyses of the data gathered by that instrument are examples of such seriousness and caution.

The *Language Inquiry* represents careful consideration of a great many things: students, teachers, English, language, customs, attitudes, behaviors, concepts, standards, and reality. A Study of the Responses to the *Language Inquiry* [ISCPET Subcontract Number SS-21-12-66, July 1969], the analysis of well over a thousand individual responses and comments to the *Inquiry*, represents a most thorough and thoughtful concern for the proper methods of research, for a realistic attitude toward language, and for a sensible approach to the teaching of language.

The Executive Committee of ISCPET was most pleased with the good work of Professor Frogner when the *Language Inquiry* was first made available. Later, the Committee voted to give wide dissemination to the report of the results of its development and administration. Reports of several ISCPET Special Research Studies have been given similar distribution because of potential concern or interest of a wider audience. It is because of the direct application to the teaching of language at the elementary, secondary, and college levels that Dr. Frogner was encouraged to prepare this little book--a handbook for using the *Language Inquiry* as a teaching device.

Raymond D. Crisp

July 31, 1969
Urbana, Illinois

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ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A major portion of any research project is the preparation of the report. The task is lessened considerably when the secretary has intelligence, outstanding clerical skills, and a pleasant smile. The task almost becomes a pleasure when that same secretary has an uncommon dedication and professional pride. Such a secretary is Miss Helen A. Bohlen, and I should like to extend my sincere appreciation to her--not only for her fine work but also for her interest.

E.A.F.

INTRODUCTION

The medieval mariner, the contemporary astronaut, the summer vacationer, and the Saturday shopper all have a destination and a route to take to reach it. The more difficult the journey, the greater the need for care in planning the route, but always the plans have to be made in relation to the starting point. A trip to St. Louis, Missouri is different in many respects if one starts from Spokane, Washington or Paducah, Kentucky or Wood River, Illinois.

All of this seems obvious in physical journeying, but the same is true of a mental journey. If the teacher as an individual (not in his capacity as a teacher) is going to acquire knowledge or understanding or a skill, he builds on what he knows or can do. If he has to solve a problem, he starts with the information and experience that he already has and with his ability in reasoning. The teacher as an individual has a difficult task, but when he acts in his capacity as a teacher, with the responsibility of seeing that twenty or thirty people reach the expected destination, then the route has to be planned with all the care and skill possible, and if the starting point is ignored, the destination will probably not be reached and the traveller will have little desire to try again.

What has been said so far represents the theory back of using the *Language Inquiry* as a teaching device. There is a need to find out where to start in teaching the different phases of language and then to plan the route accordingly. The *Language Inquiry* focuses on attitudes in relation to language; it does not aim to test information for the sake of the information itself. The attitudes (and concepts in which attitudes are revealed) reflect background information. They reflect a degree of awareness of language in its many uses. The concepts and attitudes may also reflect either acceptance or rejection of information, observation, or reasoning.

A teacher whose students are preparing to teach English in the secondary school needs to know the language concepts and attitudes held by the students in the particular methods class. So also does the teacher of a class of elementary school majors preparing to teach the language arts. The teacher of a class concerned with language but not directly with the teaching of language needs to know where to start in relation to his students. For the planning of teacher preparation programs and language courses for such programs, results from the *Language Inquiry* would be helpful.

Both a workshop leader and the participants profit from a technique such as can be found in the use of the *Language Inquiry*. Other places for its use are high school and college English Department meetings, with college Freshman English instructors a very important group. A teacher of high school English could select from the *Inquiry* those items appropriate to the particular age group and thus use the same technique.

People who use the technique of inquiring first and then teaching usually find that the inquiry stimulates interest and directs the student in a search for knowledge.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE *LANGUAGE INQUIRY*

The content of the *Language Inquiry* comes from the market place. The attitudes tested in the 100 statements have not been made up. Many have been heard by the author in one form or another in different situations, particularly in methods classes where the students were undergraduates preparing to teach English or in other types of methods classes where the students were graduates and experienced teachers, or sometimes school administrators. The author has likewise been conscious of the attitudes expressed toward different phases of language at professional conventions and workshops, curriculum committee meetings, and informal conferences with students and teachers. Textbook salesmen are also bearers of opinions about language. Some of the attitudes reflected in the *Inquiry* are reinforced by what can be found in printed sources, the newspaper editorial page being one of these. Some are expressed in classroom procedure. They may or may not have been either seen or heard as such in words.

A copy of the *Language Inquiry* follows later. An outline showing an analysis of the content appears here. Under the main divisions in the outline are numbers referring to the items in the *Inquiry*. Each item supports or illustrates the heading under which it comes, but obviously all of the items are related to some degree. A good share of them pertain quite directly to the topic, Standards in using language, and many to Language study and teaching. Wherever an item is related to another heading in a way that is particularly strong or significant, there is a cross-reference given in parentheses.

OUTLINE OF THE CONTENT OF THE *LANGUAGE INQUIRY*

Attitude toward language

51 (Language study and teaching)
56 (Language study and teaching)

Composition writing

8
36
88

Development in the use of language

3
22
72
74
(All are closely related to Language study and teaching.)

Dialects

11
39 (Language study and teaching)
(Pronunciation)
58
61
75 (Language study and teaching)
82 (Pronunciation)
83 (Grammatical forms)

Dictionaries

33
55

Grammatical forms (grammatical inflection)

2
5
14
32
53
54
66
91
92

History (development) of the English language

28
29
37
46 (Vocabulary)

Language study and teaching

4
12
13
38
40
44
47
73
77 (Grammatical forms)
85
89
90
93
100

Pronunciation

68
95

Punctuation

30
70 (Style)

Relationship between speaking and writing

35
59
81

Relationship of English to other languages

7
18 (History of the English language)

Spelling

9
26
34
43 (Standards in using language)
45 (Standards in using language)

Standards in using language

1
21
23
25 (Pronunciation)
27
41
49
64 (History of English language)
65
71
79
87
98

Structure of sentences (syntax)

6
42
62
63
69
78

Style

76
84 (Vocabulary)
96
97

Terminology

19
24 (Language study and teaching)
50
57
94

Vocabulary

10
15
16 (Standards in using language)
17 (Standards in using language)
20 (Standards in using language)
31
48 (Grammatical forms)
52 (Style)
60
67
80
86
99 (Standards in using language)

In preparing the *Language Inquiry*, the author aimed, then, to cover a range of important topics related to language, to include each topic at least twice, and to emphasize content especially significant to teachers and prospective teachers of English.

The judgments of ten linguists entered into the selection of the 100 items that comprise the final form of the

Language Inquiry.[1] In the first stage, the linguists were asked to respond to 150 statements expressing attitudes about language (or concepts in which attitudes were reflected). An excerpt from the initial letter sent by the author explains further:

> I aim to send the statements to the linguists twice, and on the first round, ask also for suggestions for improvement. The second round will be the revised and final form [final for the wording of the statements]. Afterwards the opinionnaire will be presented to prospective high school English teachers and those in service. I feel that of the latter, the public school teachers who are supervising college students are an especially strategic group.

In the second stage, there were 135 statements (items) from which it was hoped that 100 could be used in a third and final form. The vote on the 135 statements was according to Agree, Moderately agree, No opinion, Disagree. The results made it possible, in general, for the author to stay by the original plan of using those items where at least seven out of ten of the linguists concurred. There was a total of 109 items of this kind. Ninety-seven of these were used in the third or final edition. Twelve were abandoned, and three items (Nos. 6, 13, and 93) were added where the votes of Agree and Moderately agree totaled either nine or ten. This step was taken in the interest of a better balance in the content and in the number of Agree and Disagree items than there would have been otherwise. None of the wording in the statements was changed after the second edition. The vote by the linguists on the 100 statements that were selected for the final edition follows shortly. It is included in this chapter with the reproduction of the *Language Inquiry*.

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[1]The ten linguists were as follows: Harold B. Allen; W. Nelson Francis; Sumner Ives; J. J. Lamberts; Raven I. McDavid, Jr.; Jean Malmstrom; Albert H. Marckwardt; Robert C. Pooley; Priscilla Tyler; and Thomas H. Wetmore.

The linguists' generous sharing of background and scholarship contributed much in the development of the *Language Inquiry*. The responses to a request for comments on the 150 statements in the first edition were particularly helpful. Two main problems in communication were revealed at that time, one of them being the matter of such terms as grammar, accepted and acceptable, standard and nonstandard or substandard. Not all of the linguists were uniform in their use of these terms or in their reactions to them, but the author tried to prevent the term from interfering with communication and hoped for the best.

The other problem was harder to cope with. The author's aim was to present statements about language as described in the opening of this chapter. (In fact, the *Language Inquiry* was at first given the title *Language Opinionnaire*. The title was changed because it seemed awkward, but it may have been more descriptive than the present one.) A statement expressing an attitude toward some phase of language--or an opinion concerning language--may or may not be stated in a precisely reasoned manner. To illustrate, the author will use a statement where no one of the linguists disputed the wording (No. 14 on page 11). Someone else, however, referred to this as a "double-headed monster," and it might well be. The "double-headed monster" sentence reflects an attitude, rather easily found, that there is a standard within the use of language, but this standard does not determine what is "really right." There must, then, be another kind of standard that is the final authority. In considering a sentence like No. 14, one has to think of the statement as a whole to see the attitude expressed, and the whole is somehow more than the simple addition of its parts.

Likewise, expressions of opinion do not always have a comparison completed. Item 71 (page 15) is an example here. A more precise statement would include "better for what purpose than some other language" or "better in what way." However, these qualifications recognize something different from what appears in the opinion expressed, for now the language is no longer better as such or perhaps better because of its tradition but it is better because it serves different purposes or has certain qualities.

These illustrations point out, as others could also, that problems in communication easily occurred, although they did not do so in general. There were more problems in the first edition than in the second, where some of the strength of the opinions stated may have been lost but where also there may have been a gain in the precision that the linguists were

looking for. There needed to be as accurate communication as possible with all of the participants in the study and first with the linguists, since their votes, as those of scholars of language, became the standard against which the votes of the other respondents were to be measured.

The entire *Language Inquiry* is reproduced here with the votes of the linguists for each of the statements in Part I. For several of the statements, the total response is not the expected ten. This is the result of some of the linguists' not voting on those items. The form (1969 copyright) is exactly as used by the linguists in the 1968 copyright with the exception of Item 96 where the wording but not the meaning was changed slightly. (**Had** changed to **has**, and **Larry has nothing** changed to **there is nothing for Larry.**)

LANGUAGE INQUIRY

(with Responses of the Linguists)

PART I

Directions

Check the column that most nearly represents your response to each of the statements that follow. Wherever the question concerns usage, consider the statement in relation to American English unless otherwise specified.

Agree means definite agreement (complete or nearly so)
Moderately agree means agreement with reservations
No opinion means just that (no opinion either way and therefore the response might be described as neutral)
Disagree means definite disagreement (complete or nearly so)

Be sure to check in only one of the spaces for each statement.

STATEMENTS		Agree	Moderately agree	No opinion	Disagree
1. Teachers should insist on formal English in the classroom, both in speaking and writing.	1.				10
2. The signs saying **Drive Slow** should be corrected to read **Drive Slowly.**	2.				10
3. A native speaker of English has an operational knowledge of his language without instruction in it.	3.	9	1		
4. Linguists now know the characteristics that the English language should have.	4.			2	7
5. A college student made the following comment to his friend: **If the time was longer between quarters, I'd go down to Florida or somewhere.** He should have used **were** instead of **was** in the **if** clause.	5.		2		8
6. Verbless sentences are frequently effective in descriptive writing.	6.	6	4		
7. The speakers of Chinese and English use some of the same methods to signal meaning.	7.	9		1	
8. An outline written according to a standard form is a prerequisite to the successful writing of an essay.	8.				10

9.	One looks in vain for order in English spelling.	9.		1		9
10.	The illogical sequence in a sentence like **She drove back and forth every day** is confusing even to many native users of English.	10.			1	9
11.	People who speak differently from the majority follow some pattern of regularity in the English language.	11.	9			1
12.	It is only within the last ten years that there has been any questioning of the classifications found in traditional grammar.	12.				10
13.	A student who thinks independently would be skeptical about the common textbook definition **A noun is a word that names.**	13.	6	3	1	
14.	Even though **It's me** is accepted in informal English, the expression **It is I** is really right.	14.				10
15.	The use of words like **terrific** and **O.K.** for approval is sometimes in good taste.	15.	10			
16.	Meanings of words are based on consent (acceptance) within a speech community.	16.	10			
17.	A redundant expression cannot be standard usage.	17.				10
18.	The structure of German is more like that of English than the structure of Latin is.	18.	9			1
19.	The words **linguistics** and **grammar** are synonyms.	19.		2		8
20.	Since **silly** once had the more elevated meaning of **happy**, it has degenerated as a word.	20.	1		2	7
21.	Standard English allows for no choices in language forms.	21.				10
22.	The child's development in the use of language during the pre-school years provides clues for methods to be used in the English classroom.	22.	7	3		
23.	As soon as we take present-day usage for a guide in determining what is acceptable English, we break down all standards.	23.				10
24.	Linguists look upon their work as that of controlling the language, of keeping it within bounds.	24.				10

STATEMENTS		Agree	Moderately agree	No opinion	Disagree
25. If twentieth-century standards in language were higher, there would be no instances of divided usage in pronunciation.	25.				10
26. Adherence to the conventions of spelling can easily be overestimated as a characteristic of a good composition.	26.	9	1		
27. The usual composition textbook is a sound guide to facts about English usage.	27.			1	9
28. The use of word order as a way to show meaning has developed in English grammar mainly since Shakespeare's time.	28.		1		9
29. The English language is more a product of historical accident than it is of the efforts of the grammarians, lexicographers, or critics who have wanted to shape it.	29.	9			
30. Students should be taught that they must place a comma after every introductory clause or phrase coming before the subject of a sentence.	30.				10
31. To most people **He's not going nowhere** means that the person spoken about is going somewhere.	31.				10
32. The English language is limited mainly to **shall** and **will** for expressing future time.	32.				10
33. Modern dictionary editors base definitions on context.	33.	7	2		1
34. The spelling **aesthetic** should be used because it reflects the origin of the word better than does the spelling **esthetic.**	34.			2	8
35. Good writing is recorded speaking.	35.		1	1	8
36. Students should be discouraged from using the inductive method in the development of an essay.	36.				10
37. What happened in the English language in the past has little relationship to what is happening now.	37.		1		9
38. Drill in conjugating English verbs is of little consequence to the native speaker.	38.	10			

39.	In giving a talk on tennis, a high school student in southern Illinois used the pronunciation **tinnis.** He was told that regional pronunciations would not be accepted in the English class. More teachers should use the same method.	39.					10
40.	Whoever learns a language learns an alphabet.	40.					10
41.	Usage, not redundancy, makes **this here** a nonstandard (substandard) expression in English.	41.	10				
42.	Because of the preposition at the end, the following sentence is not accepted as standard English: **The young man now had something to work for.**	42.					10
43.	A drama group in the Middle West used the spelling **theater** in the name of their organization. They should have used **theatre** because it is a better spelling.	43.					10
44.	The more rules of language an individual can state, the better speaker or writer he will be.	44.					10
45.	Since the **k** in **knowledge** is not pronounced, we should promote reform in spelling by omitting this letter in our own writing.	45.					10
46.	Today we make constant use of words derived from the native stock brought to England from the continent at the beginning of the Old English period.	46.	9	1			
47.	In English classes, a study of pronouns in the objective case should be preceded by a study of nouns in the objective case.	47.					9
48.	A college senior made the statement: "I am going to student-teach next quarter." The expression **to student-teach** represents a process made use of mainly in college campus English.	48.	1		1		8
49.	Standards in English are relative, not absolute.	49.	8	2			
50.	English that is free of idiom is English well used.	50.	1				9
51.	It is normal for people to have a strong attachment for the language they use.	51.	8	2			
52.	The bigger the words used, the more effective the expression.	52.					10
53.	The rule **Two or more singular subjects connected by "and" require a plural verb** does not always apply in standard English.	53.	8	1			1

STATEMENTS		Agree	Moderately agree	No opinion	Disagree
54. Because there is already so little grammatical inflection left in English, teachers should support the use of the inflected form rather than the phrase to state the genitive (possessive). The expression **the course's value** would then be preferable to **the value of the course.**	54.				10
55. Twentieth-century standards of scholarship in dictionary compiling and editing are low as compared with those of the eighteenth century.	55.				10
56. It is up to English teachers to see that our language does not change.	56.				10
57. To say that an expression is colloquial is to say that it is not entirely acceptable.	57.		2		8
58. Every speaker of English uses at least one dialect, often more than one.	58.	8	1		
59. Written English is the foundation on which spoken English rests.	59.				10
60. The following sentence represents standard English usage: **A financial arrangement was worked out between the chorus, band, and orchestra.**	60.	10			
61. Standard American English is a group of dialects within American English.	61.	8	1		1
62. A study of English grammar should be concerned with relationships between sentences as well as within sentences.	62.	8		1	
63. The title "It Makes a Difference" needs to be re-stated because the pronoun has no antecedent.	63.				10
64. Change in language is normal, but so also is continuity.	64.	10			
65. Grammatical rules stated in textbooks and handbooks determine what is accepted English and what is not accepted.	65.				10
66. Splitting the infinitive may sometimes enable the writer to express his ideas with greater clarity and force than otherwise.	66.	10			
67. In teaching students how to write a letter of application, a teacher said, "Don't talk down to the person who will read your letter. Don't, then, use many one-syllable words." This was sound advice.	67.		1		9

68.	Students in American high schools should be informed that the pronunciation **prŏ-cess** is preferable to **prŏ-cess.**	68.				10
69.	A person should be criticized for the use of **if** instead of **whether** in a sentence like **I'll see if there is a tape recorder in the room.**	69.		1		9
70.	Punctuation may conform to the customary rules and yet be stylistically poor.	70.	8			1
71.	A teacher told his students that Latin is a better language than English. He was accurate in his statement.	71.			1	9
72.	An individual may acquire an intuitive mastery of the form and order of English.	72.	10			
73.	Current activity in the area of grammatical theory and method reflects a confidence that the right answers have now been found.	73.		2		8
74.	For most people, the patterns of the native language are largely established during the pre-school years.	74.	9			1
75.	In directing a Shakespearean play, a college dramatics coach in the Kentucky foothills insisted that the students substitute twentieth-century platform English pronunciation for their regional dialect forms. He should be complimented for taking this stand.	75.		1	1	8
76.	Contractions are inappropriate in any form of written English.	76.				10
77.	The following sentence is being analyzed: **John will look up the current value of the English pound.** It seems sensible to consider **will look up** as the verb; however it is not correct to do so, since **up** has to be either an adverb or a preposition.	77.				10
78.	Comma-splice sentences (independent clauses or main statements with just a comma between) have justifiable uses.	78.	9			1
79.	We should have an American Academy to regulate our language.	79.				10
80.	A child who asks permission by saying **Can I go too?** should not have his English corrected by being told to say **May I go too?**	80.	7	2	1	
81.	Proficiency in speaking depends on proficiency in writing.	81.			1	9

STATEMENTS		Agree	Moderately agree	No opinion	Disagree
82. The pronunciation used in the Middle West is not as good as that used in the East.	82.				10
83. The forms used in nonstandard English are a degeneration of the forms used in standard English.	83.				10
84. Language that aims to arouse emotion should be distrusted **per se.**	84.				10
85. Statements (a) and (b) are at different levels of abstraction; (a) I gave her the book this morning. (b) **Her** is the indirect object, and **book** is the direct object.	85.	7	1	1	
86. Metaphors are used mainly in literary English.	86.				10
87. There is more than one variety of accepted English usage.	87.	10			
88. Any essays except the most informal must be written from the third person objective point of view.	88.				10
89. Finding the elements of which a sentence is composed — primary, secondary, and tertiary — is a method that has appeared within the last decade.	89.			1	8
90. A person cannot use sentences until he can describe (talk about) subjects and predicates.	90.				10
91. The word **number** is singular in form but may be either singular or plural in thought.	91.	8		1	
92. A teacher should drill strenuously on **Whom do you mean** as the correct form.	92.				10
93. In using language, we are abstracting experience.	93.	5	4	1	
94. A description of a grammatical system must not be identified as being the system itself.	94.	10			
95. A truly cultivated person will pronounce the word **either** as **ī - ther** (not **ē - ther**).	95.				10

96. In writing a summary of a story, a student has just finished explaining what the life of the main character has been like. The student then goes on: "But now there is nothing for Larry to look forward to except a nice-paying office job and invitations to the right parties." The writer was wrong in beginning a sentence with **but.** 96.

97. The following sentence is quoted from a book review written in an English class: "Paula doesn't want Smithy to join the crowd of compromisers and money makers." The sentence should be corrected for the use of a contraction. 97.

98. Change in language is inevitable. 98.

99. The etymology of a word determines whether or not it is accepted as standard English. 99.

100. The process of learning a language differs from the process of learning historical facts. 100.

			10
1		1	8
10			
			10
10			

PART II

Which *three* of the statements in Part I would you most like to hear someone discuss? Possible reasons are suggested in the list that follows. Select the reason (or reasons) for each of your three choices and check in the appropriate column (or columns).

a. I need more background information about the topic or idea represented in the statement.
b. I would like terminology explained.
c. I feel that the statement represents an area where English teachers need an especially strong background.
d. I feel that my preparation for teaching English (is) (was) not strong enough in this phase of language study.
e. I do not find a reason for my choice represented in a, b, c, or d. I am stating the reason here.

Number of the statement selected in Part I — Reason or reasons for your selection.

Number	a	b	c	d	e

Number of the statement selected in Part I — Reason or reasons for your selection.

Number	a	b	c	d	e

Number of the statement selected in Part I — Reason or reasons for your selection.

Number	a	b	c	d	e

ADMINISTRATION AND INTERPRETATION

While the *Language Inquiry* is not a test in the usual meaning of the word, the common classroom procedures are followed as in all testing. In the results, there is no total score, no median, no percentile rank. The basis for interpreting is to compare the respondent's vote for each item with the votes of the ten experts (found here in the preceding section). The respondent asks, "How does my idea about this statement or my attitude compare with the responses of the ten linguists--the experts?"

An excerpt from A Study of the Responses to the *Language Inquiry* [USOE HE-145, OE-5-10-029, ISCPET Subcontract SS-21-12-66, July 1969] illustrates the kind of thinking that entered into the interpretation of the results for two items in research that involved 597 college students, 202 public school teachers cooperating with the colleges in their student teaching program, and 83 recent graduates--all in the state of Illinois. Results for many more items are discussed in the publication. In the excerpt which follows, there is a reference to the .01 level of significance. This means that the chances are 99 in 100 that the observed difference is a true difference and not due to chance.

> Under the topic Standards in using language, the differences for two of the items (1 and 41) are at the .01 level of significance for the

entire group of college students and also for each of the subgroups. The linguists disagreed 100 percent with No. 1 and agreed 100 percent with No. 41. With this situation in mind, a review of the statements is important:

> 1. *Teachers should insist on formal English in the classroom, both in speaking and writing.*
>
> 41. *Usage, not redundancy, makes* **this here** *a nonstandard (substandard) expression in English.*

A response to Item 1 reflects an attitude toward the larger question of the varieties of English and the appropriateness of language to the situation. The question of the realistic approach enters in here also. Item 41 approaches the topic of Standards by way of a particular expression in English. The student respondent may have answered with blanket warnings about redundancy as such uppermost in his memory. It would be more important for the student to understand how redundancy functions in language--how at one time in the history of a language, a redundant expression may be accepted but not at another or how it may be accepted usage in one language but not in another. As one of the linguists wrote in commenting on Item 17 (under Vocabulary): "Some redundancies, such as double negatives, are substandard, but redundancy per se does not make an expression substandard. The nature of verbal communication is such that languages have some built-in redundancy." Is not this the kind of understanding of the characteristics of language that should be provided for the student through his course work? And most certainly would it not be essential for the English major preparing to teach? (Page 21)

In Part II of the *Language Inquiry*, there are no comparisons with responses of the linguists. Part II provides a means for the respondent to record the three items that he would most like to hear discussed and the reasons for his choices. The responses here should be helpful to a teacher or any leader of a group in planning a discussion of the items in the *Inquiry*.

WHAT NEXT?

It has been the author's experience that using the techniques of finding out existing concepts and attitudes stimulates interest in a class, sharpens reading, and helps the instructor organize the work in the course. It seems especially important in the study of language, where unfortunately and unnecessarily there is often the situation of either fear or apathy. An attitude that a teacher would like to find toward all phases of language was expressed by Jespersen in the preface to his grammar published in 1909: "It has been my endeavour in this work to represent English Grammar not as a set of stiff dogmatic precepts, according to which some things are correct and others absolutely wrong, but as something living and developing under continual fluctuations and undulations, something that is founded on the past and prepares the way for the future, something that is not always consistent or perfect, but progressing and perfectible--in one word, human." [Otto Jespersen, A Modern English Grammar on Historical Principles (London, 1909), p. v.]

The author is suggesting here a short list of publications that complement each other and that could stimulate progress toward the ideal attitude expressed in the quotation. The list is not intended to be a bibliography for any one topic, but the readings could contribute toward the teacher's development of a personal philosophy about language. It is not intended as a list of references on how to teach language; however, the implications are evident. Some of the references illustrate publications from early in the twentieth century--4, 15, 31; others are illustrations of early concerns with usage and standards--9, 10, and 18.

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